

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 10143 01 OF 02 041453Z

53

ACTION ARA-10

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AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

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ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MEXICO 10143

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MX PBOR

SUBJ: MONTHLY POLITICAL HIGHLIGHTS - NOVEMBER 1974

### 1. FOREIGN ADVENTURES

MEXICO AND ITS GOVERNMENT CONCENTRATED UNACCUSTOMED ATTENTION ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DURING NOVEMBER, WITH RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS THAT HAVE YET TO BE THOROUGHLY DIGESTED. IN GENERAL, PRES. ECHEVERRIA SEEMED DETERMINED TO CARRY MEXICO OFF ON A MORE RADICAL TANGENT THAN IN THE PAST, USING WEALTHIER NATIONS (INCLUDING THE US), TRANSNATIONAL CORPS., AND "FASCISTS/NEO-COLONIALISTS" AS HIS PRINCIPAL FOILS. WHAT THESE NEW DEPARTURES WERE INTENDED TO ACHIEVE IS UNCLEAR.

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 10143 01 OF 02 041453Z

THERE WAS SOME OBVIOUS GRANDSTANDING; ECHEVERRIA FLEW TO ROME

WITH AN ENORMOUS ENTOURAGE TO RALLY FOOD-HUNGRY NATIONS WITH DEMANDS FOR "A MORE EQUITABLE WORLD ECONOMIC STRUCTURE". OTHER HIGH LEVEL GOM DELEGATIONS WERE DISPATCHED TO EASTERN EUROPE, TO CUBA, AND TO VENEZUELA WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO BROADEN MEXICO'S FOREIGN TRADE BASE AND THUS REDUCE DEPENDENCE UPON THE PRESENT "INQUITABLE" SYSTEM. WITH VENEZUELA, THE MEXICANS ALSO PUSHED AHEAD WITH PLANS TO FORM A LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION EXCLUDING THE U.S. MAJOR MEXICAN DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES WERE MEANWHILE PRESSED TOWARD A CONCLUSION WITHIN THE OAS AND UN-- IN QUITO, AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO LIFT OAS SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA; AND IN NEW YORK, A FINISH-LINE DRIVE TO OBTAIN UNGA APPROVAL OF ECHEVERRIA'S CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES (CERDS).

AMID THESE (AND OTHER) INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES, A CLIMAX OF SORTS SEEMED TO OCCUR WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF MEXICO'S RELATIONS WITH CHILE. WITH ALMOST ALLEGORICAL SIMPLICITY, CHILE BECAME THE SYMBOLIC BATTLEGROUND ON WHICH FORCES FOR NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE WERE STRUGGLING WITH THOSE OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND NEOCOLONIALIST INTRIGUE. AFTER OVER A YEAR SINCE THE CHILEAN COUP, MEXICO BROKE RELATIONS WITH THE JUNTA AND DID NOT DENY THE WIDESPREAD ASSUMPTION IT WAS DOING SO AS A PROTEST AGAINST ITS "FACISM" AND BETRAYAL OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. AND SIMULTANEOUSLY, A WAVE OF PROTEST WAS RAISED IN THE NATIONAL CONGRESS AND MEDIA IN RESPONSE TO CIA DIRECTOR COLBY'S ALLEGED ASSERTION OF A GOVERNMENT'S RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER STATE WHENEVER ITS OWN VITAL INTERESTS WERE AT STAKE. TO COMPLETE THE PICTURE, FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA LET IT BE KNOWN THAT MEXICO WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER PULLING OUT OF THE OAS AND RIO TREATY IF THESE WERE NOT RADICALLY REFORMED TO ELIMINATE EXISTING "PREDOMINANT HEGEMONIES".

WHAT MOTIVATED ECHEVERRIA'S DIPLOMATIC TANGENT IS STILL DIFFICULT TO SAY. IF ITS PURPOSE WAS SIMPLY DEMOGOGIC, IT WAS POORLY ADVISED SINCE IT HAS TENDED ONLY TO WIDEN THE BREACH BETWEEN HIS PUBLIC SUPPORTERS AND HIS PRIVATE CRITICS. IF IT WAS AIMED AT FORGING NEW THIRD WORLD ALLIANCES ABROAD WHICH MIGHT OFFSET MEXICO'S DEPENDENCE ON THE US, IT DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN SERIOUSLY SO FAR BY MANY OTHER NATIONS, AND IT HAS SERIOUSLY OFFENDED SEVERAL IN THE PROCESS.

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 10143 01 OF 02 041453Z

ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION MAY LIE IN THE FRUSTRATION WHICH ECHEVERRIA HIMSELF MUST FEEL AS HIS PRESIDENTIAL TERM NEARS ITS END, WITH (IN HIS OWN WORDS) ONLY "MODEST" SUCCESSES IN HIS REFORMIST POLICIES AND PUBLIC INTEREST CENTERING ON THE SUCCESSION AS THOUGH THERE WAS NOT STILL TWO YEARS LEFT OF ECHEVERRIA'S ADMINISTRATION. HIS AWARENESS THAT, IN THE END, MEXICO REMAINS AS DEPENDENT AS EVER UPON ITS TIES WITH THE US, COUPLED WITH INCREASING SENSITIVITIES TO CRITICS WHO FAULT HIM

FOR FALLING SHORT OF HIS GOAL OF ENDING THAT DEPENDENCE MUST GALL HIM. HE MAY ALSO SEE MORE SINISTER THREATS THAN ACTUALLY EXIST. ALTHOUGH GOM OFFICIALS HAVE REPEATEDLY SCOFFED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF A CHILEAN-STYLE COUP HERE, THEY SEEM DETERMINED TO DEMONSTRATE--AT LEAST RHETORICALLY--THAT MEXICO IS PREPARED TO TAKE ON AND DEFEAT THE VERY "DEMONS" WHICH BROUGHT DOWN ALLENDE A YEAR AGO.

## 2. MEXICO BREAKS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CHILE

THE GOM'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE BREAK AT 6:15 PM, NOVEMBER 26 TOOK FOREIGN OBSERVERS, CHILEANS (WHO HAD HIGH LEVEL OFFICIAL MISSIONS IN MEXICO AT THE TIME) AND PROBABLY MANY GOM OFFICIALS BY SURPRISE. HOWEVER, FACT THAT MEXICAN PRESS, COLUMNISTS, POLITICIANS, AND ALL POLITICAL PARTIES EXCEPT PAN ISSUED STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT, IN SOME CASES QUITE LENGTHY, IN TIME FOR PUBLICATION THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 27, INDICATES THESE GROUPS HAD SOME ADVANCE WARNING. PAN DEPUTIES, NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS TO CHORUS PRAISING MOVE (SEE MEXICO 10052) CAME UNDER SUCH VIOLENT CRITICISM FOR MERELY QUESTIONING THE MOVE THAT EVEN EXCELSIOR (LEFTIST, INFLUENTIAL) EDITORIALIZED IN SUPPORT OF PAN'S RIGHT TO DISSENT.

## 3. PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA VISITS ROME

ON NOVEMBER 11, PRES. ECHEVERRIA MADE A SPEECH BEFORE THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE DENOUNCING "ANY ATTEMPT TO CONVERT THE FOOD SHORTAGE INTO A FORM OF STRATEGIC PRESSURE BY THE PRODUCER-NATIONS" AND PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORLD FOOD BANK. IN A SPEECH BEFORE 104 DELEGATES OF THE "GROUP OF 77" ON NOVEMBER 12, ECHEVERRIA CALLED ON THE OIL PRODUCING NATIONS TO USE THEIR NEW WEALTH TO HELP ALLEVIATE HUNGER IN THE POOR NATIONS OF THE WORLD RATHER THAN ACTING LIKE THE GREAT POWERS

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PAGE 04 MEXICO 10143 01 OF 02 041453Z

HAVE. ADDITIONALLY, HE PREDICTABLY URGED THE NECESSITY OF HIS ECONOMIC CHARTER AND CASTIGATED THE GREAT POWERS FOR NEOCOLONIALISM AND FOR SQUANDERING THE WORLD'S RESOURCES IN ARMS RACES.

## 4. CABINET MEMBER VISITS ROMANIA, ALBANIA, AND ALGERIA

ON HIS RETURN TO MEXICO NOVEMBER 21, SECRETARY OF THE PRESIDENCY HUGO CERVANTES DEL RIO LISTED THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS TRIP AS FOLLOWS: (1) MEXICO WILL CONSIDER ALGERIA'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE EXPLOITATION OF OIL; (2) MEXICO IN TURN, HAS MADE A SIMILAR REQUEST TO ROMANIA; (3) PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU HAS INVITED PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA TO VISIT ROMANIA IN 1975, AND (4) AN ALBANIAN MISSION WILL ARRIVE IN MEXICO DURING THE FIRST PART OF DECEMBER TO LAY THE BASIS FOR DIRECT TRADE BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS. (FAST

ON THE HEELS OF ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OCTOBER 15  
AND CERVANTE DEL RIO'S VISIT, ANOTHER CABINET MEMBER, SECRETARY  
OF COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION EUGENIO MENDEZ DOCURRO,  
DEPARTED FOR ALBANIA WITH A MEXICAN COMMERCIAL MISSION ON  
NOVEMBER 27).

5. MEXICAN MISINTERPRETATION OF SUPREME COURT DECISION

U.S. SUPREME COURT DECISION NOVEMBER 25 IN SAXBE VS. BUSTOS  
AND CARDENAS VS. SAXBE WAS WIDELY MISINTERPRETED BY MEXICAN  
PRESS TO MEAN HIGHEST COURT HAD SOMEHOW OPENED A DOOR TO  
TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT IN US WHICH HERETOFORE HAD

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 10143 02 OF 02 041520Z

53

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ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MEXICO 10143

BEEN CLOSED. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY QUICKLY RELEASED CLARIFYING  
STATEMENT, THIS DID NOT RECEIVE PROMINENT PLAY AND TWO DAYS  
AFTER DECISION EMBASSY CONSULAR SECTION WAS RECEIVING NUMEROUS

INQUIRIES ABOUT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN US (SEE MEXICO 9940).

#### 6. RETRATOS HABLADOS AND THE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION

WITH THE "UNCOVERING" OF THE PRI'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, (AND MEXICO'S NEXT PRESIDENT), LESS THAN A YEAR AWAY, MEXICO HAS ENTERED FULL SWING INTO THE GUESSING GAME OF IDENTIFYING EL TAPADO, THE (AT PRESENT) "COVERED ONE". ALTHOUGH FUTURISMO (POLITICAL MANEUVERING BY ASPIRANTS, OR BY THEIR SUPPORTERS), HAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH TRADITION BEEN ROUNDLY CONDEMNED BY EVERYONE FROM EX-PRES. PORTES GIL ON DOWN, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HIMSELF (PERHAPS KNOWING HE COULD NOT PREVENT IT) GAVE THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MEXICO 10143 02 OF 02 041520Z

GREEN LIGHT TO PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF THE SUCCESSION BY TERMING OPEN EXAMINATION OF THE POSSIBLE CANDIDATES A HEALTHY PROCESS.

EXAMINATION THUS FAR HAS CONSISTED OF "RETRATOS HABLADOS" (VERBAL PICTURES) OF THE NEXT PRESIDENT. NOT SUPRISINGLY, MOST OF THESE CHARACTERIZATIONS ARE CAST IN TERMS OF COMPARISONS TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA. ECHEVERRIA GAVE HIS OWN VERSION -- THE NEXT PRESIDENT WILL HAVE TO BE A "LATE WORKER AND EARLY RISER".

AN EXAMPLE FROM NUMEROUS OTHERS: "HE MUST HAVE VERSATILITY TO UNDERSTAND AND RESOLVE NATIONAL PROBLEMS -- HE MUST BE A REFLECTION OF PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA" (VOG-ELECT OF SINALOA).

LIGHTENING THE DREARY LITANY OF PRESCRIBED VIRTUES, PRESIDENT OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY OF NATIONAL ACTION (PAN), JOSE ANGEL CONCHELLO, PREDICTED THE NEXT PRESIDENT WILL BE "A BALD-HEADED TECNOCRAT, BUT 'HUMANIZED' BY AN OCCASIONAL APPEARANCE BEFORE THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES..."

ONE SUBSTANTIVE DEVELOPMENT HAS OCCURRED -- AFTER POLITICAL COLUMNISTS REPORTED SUPPORT FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL STIPULATION THAT THE PRESIDENT BE A NATIVE BORN CITIZEN OF NATIVE BORN CITIZEN PARENTS, SEVERAL POLITICAL FIGURES OPINED THAT NO STATE GOVERNOR HAD THE NECESSARY EXPERIENCE TO BE PRESIDENT. THESE WERE ALLUSIONS TO THE SITUATION AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE GOV. OF THE STATE OF MEXICO, CARLOS HANK GONZALEZ, WHOSE PARENTS WERE BORN IN GERMANY. OPINIONS WERE STILL BEING PUT FORTH ON THE SUBJECT WHEN PRI PRESIDENT REYES HEROLAS DECLARED IN A SPEECH BEFORE HANK SUPPORTERS THAT HANK HAD FULFILLED A HORATIO ALGER DREAM OF RISING FROM HUMBLE ORIGINS TO THE "HIGHEST POSITION TO WHICH HE COULD ASPIRE -- THE GOVERNORSHIP OF MEXICO". MOST MEXICANS INTERPRETED THIS AS AN AUTHORITATIVE SQUASHING OF HANK'S ASPIRATIONS BUT OTHERS READ INTO A RESPONSE BY HANK A DETERMINATION TO PURSUE HIS AMBITIONS.

#### 7. ELECTIONS IN PUEBLA

UNUSUAL ATTENTION WAS FOCUSED NOVEMBER 24 ON STATE ELECTIONS IN PUEBLA, WHERE IN 1973 THE PAN WON TWO SEATS IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. BOTH THE PRI AND THE PAN WAGED VIGOROUS CAMPAIGNS - THE PRI TO SHOW THAT PAN VICTORIES WERE FLUKES, THE PAN TO  
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PAGE 03 MEXICO 10143 02 OF 02 041520Z

DEMONSTRATE THE OPPOSITE. PAN OFFICIALS IN PUEBLA PRIVATELY CONCEDED THEY HAD LITTLE HOPE OF WINNING THE GOVERNORSHIP, BUT WERE CONFIDENT IN THE MAYORALTY RACE IN PUEBLA, THE STATE CAPITAL, WHERE THEIR CANDIDATE WAS ONE OF THE TWO PAN VICTORS IN FEDERAL DEPUTY ELECTIONS. PRI OFFICIALS, CLAIMING (ALSO PRIVATELY) THE PAN VICTORIES HAD BEEN PROTEST VOTES AGAINST BAD GOVERNMENT AND THAT THIS TIME A CAREFUL SELECTION OF CANDIDATES HAD ELIMINATED THE CAUSE FOR PROTEST, PREDICTED VICTORIES IN ALL ELECTIONS.

ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL RESULTS STILL ARE NOT KNOWN, APPARENTLY PAN WON 3 MUNICIPALITIES, INCLUDING TEHUACAN, THE STATE'S SECOND LARGEST CITY. IN PUEBLA THE PRI CANDIDATE REPORTEDLY IS AHEAD BY A 5 TO 4 MARGIN, BUT PAN IMMEDIATELY DENOUNCED ALLEGED THEFT OF SEVERAL DOZEN BALLOT BOXES AND DEMANDED THE ELECTIONS BE ANNULLED, WHICH IS NOT LIKELY TO HAPPEN.

#### 8. CONGRESS PARTICIPATES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

REFLECTING WIDESPREAD PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO THE FISCAL REFORM MEASURES (PARTICULARLY GASOLINE) THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES IN NOVEMBER LOWERED THE TAX ON THE CHEAPER OF MEXICO'S TWO BRANDS OF GASOLINE AND, OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW, THE SENATE (OR A GROUP OF SENATORS) APPARENTLY PERSUADED PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA TO ABANDON HIS PROPOSAL TO CREATE A SYSTEM OF "AT LARGE" SENATORS (FROM OPPOSITION PARTIES) SIMILAR TO THE SYSTEM IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. IN FORMER CASE, EXECUTIVE PROBABLY ACQUIESCED IN KNOWLEDGE THAT REVISION WOULD TAKE EDGE OFF POPULAR REACTION. IN LATTER CASE, IT APPEARS THAT PRESIDENT CHANGED MIND WHEN TOLD PROPOSAL WOULD VIOLATE CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE, NAMELY, THAT EACH SOVEREIGN STATE IN FEDERAL UNION IS REPRESENTED BY TWO SENATORS; THAT SENATORS DID NOT PUBLICLY CONFRONT ECHEVERRIA WITH OPPOSITION DOUBTLESSLY MADE IT EASIER FOR ECHEVERRIA TO BE PERSUADED. ALTHOUGH STILL BEARING LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO THE ROLE ENVISIONED FOR THE LEGISLATURE IN MONTESQUIEU'S CONCEPT OF DIVISION OF POWERS, THE NORMALLY RUBBER STAMP CONGRESS OCCASIONALLY DOES PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. (SEE MEXICO 9798 AND MEXICO 8961).

#### 9. ACTIVITY - AND LACK OF IT- AMONG THE OPPOSITION

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PAGE 04 MEXICO 10143 02 OF 02 041520Z

AFTER THREE MONTHS OF RELATIVE TRANQUILITY, TERRORIST VIOLENCE BROKE OUT IN GUADALAJARA, MEXICO CITY, AND OAXACA, WHERE A TOTAL OF FOURTEEN BOMBS EXPLODED, ON NOVEMBER 17 AND 18. THE BOMBS WERE DIRECTED PRIMARILY AGAINST GOM OFFICES. EARLIER IN NOVEMBER KIDNAPPINGS RETURNED TO THE NEWS WITH ABDUCTIONS IN POZA RICA, VERACRUZ AND CUERNAVACA, MORELIA.

WITHIN THE REALM OF LEGAL OPPOSITION, THE UNREGISTERED PARTY OF SOCIALIST WORKERS (PST) MARCHED 5,000 STRONG THROUGH MEXICO CITY AFTER A SYMPATHETIC RECEPTION BY PRES. ECHEVERRIA. THE MEXICAN PARTY OF WORKERS (PMT), FROM WHICH THE PST IS A SPINOFF, HAS BEEN QUIET, ALTHOUGH LEADER HERBERTO CASTILLO WRITES AN OCCASIONAL ARTICLE FOR EXCELSIOR. THE POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY (PPS) APPARENTLY WON THE MAYORALTY OF TEZIUTLAN, PUEBLA (WHERE PPS FOUNDER LOMBARDO TOLEDANO WAS BORN) BUT OTHERWISE HAS NOT OPPOSED THE GOVERNMENT ON ANY ISSUES. THE AUTHENTIC PARTY OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION, FOLLOWING DEATH OF PRESIDENT BARRAGAN IN SEPTEMBER, HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO REFRAIN FROM INTRA- PARTY SQUABBLES LONG ENOUGH TO CONVENE A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO ELECT A NEW PRESIDENT, BUT NONETHELESS HAS THE INSIDE TRACK TO WIN THE MAYORALTY OF NUEVO LAREDO, WITH THE SAME CANDIDATE (CANTU RUSAS) WHO WON FEDERAL DEPUTYSHIP LAST YEAR. AS NOTED IN ABOVE ITEMS AND PREVIOUS REPORTS, THE PARTY OF NATIONAL ACTION (PAN) HAS PROVIDED THE GOM WITH THE MOST SERIOUS OPPOSITION (ELECTORALLY, AND ON ISSUES SUCH AS TAX REFORM, CHILE) -- ENOUGH SO THAT NEITHER THE PRI OR THE GOM CAN SAFELY IGNORE PAN ACTIVITY. BRANDIN

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